

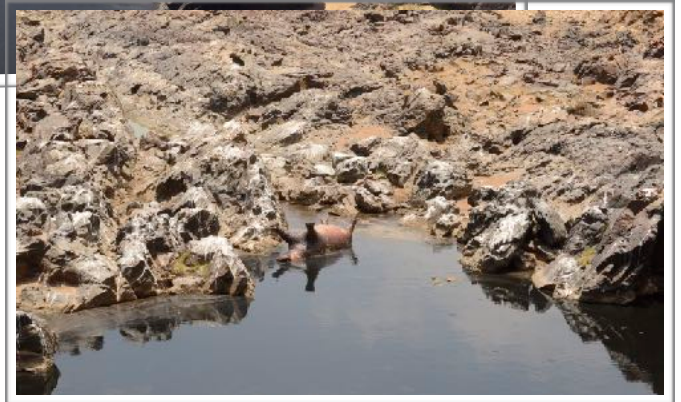
# Ruaha River Update

## October 2018



**This** year - October 27th **2018** - the river has a very small trickle (above) Ibuguziwa.

**Last** October 13th **2017** - the river was dry (right) Ibuguziwa (we also had an outbreak of anthrax)



**Despite EXCESSIVE** rainfall during **March and April** there is **little difference** to the water in the GRR this **October 2018 to last October 2017** (which had normal to moderate rainfall).  
(Compare the photos for **early April 2018 and end of March 2017** on the top of the next page to see the big contrast in flows.)

**The huge drop occurred between April and July which is solely due to excessive abstraction of water up stream.**

So from these visual records **it appears that even when we have excessive rainfall the river level drops dramatically and is not able to flow all year.**

**This means that there is excessive abstraction occurring up stream after the rains have finished.**

## Comparisons 2017/2018



***Ruaha River at Ibuguziwa bridge  
April 1 2018***

You can see that the river was flowing bank to bank. Some years ago this is what we would call '**normal**' flow for March - May. However this year it is **due to excessive rainfall** in the catchment area.



***Ruaha River at Ibuguziwa bridge  
March 27th 2017***

This is how it looked at the same spot last year at almost the same time. The river last year never attained a bank to bank flow during the rainy season, as water abstraction was excessive, **despite normal rainfall**.

With the reduction in dry season flows, Ruaha National Park has become dependant on the annual wet season, bank to bank floods to clean out the old stagnant pools and refresh them with clean water. Thankfully, due to very high rainfall in March and April this year we had that luxury.

**But**

**If we do not curtail the illegal abstraction of water in the catchment area during the dry season Ruaha National Park will not survive.**

**Rain fed rice production, and proper management of the existing, legal irrigation channels, will go a long way to resolve this issue.**

It is not just about the animals, but about the thousands of people whose livelihood depends on this river.:-The many hundreds who work in tourist industry, fishing in Mtera, not to mention hydro production for the whole of Tanzania.

Its not so hard to make this river flow: with a serious attitude to the management of the irrigation channels things could improve remarkably.

In 2009 the river flowed all year, purely because the irrigation gates were closed during the dry season on ONE river only; the Ndembera.

**With the current global warming issues, every country in the world needs to learn how to conserve its water supplies and curtail wastage, especially in farming practices.**

**It would be wise to start now before we have lost our rivers completely.**